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abeyance such as the immaculate conception (*sic*), Christology, the fatherhood of God, redemption through Christ alone, the use of wine at the sacraments, and the assertion that Christianity is the only true religion. This would overcome prejudice while the heart and life of the Moslem were being won to the Christian way of living. An appeal may at once be made to Islam by urging the unity of God, his omnipotence and goodness, the miracles of Christ, Christian eschatology, the nobility of the teaching of Jesus and his ideal life, the emphasis of Christianity upon social regeneration and human service, a worship of God which is personal and free from formalism and casuistry, and the use of the Christian Bible, which is also Scripture for the Moslem. It is plainly evident that Dr. Barton places the emphasis upon life rather than upon creed, and that he would avoid the witty Japanese criticism of the Christian attempt to replace one mythology by another. A few decades ago he would have been accused of sacrificing the things essential to salvation. But having gone so far may it not be possible to go farther and let the future theology of the Orient build itself out of the regenerated social life which will have incorporated the social values of the West into the cultural heritage of the East? Theologies are not normally imposed; they grow, as living ideals, out of the life of each age and are dynamic because they interpret the deep meanings of life. It is futile to expect that the new Christian Orient will interpret its religious life in terms of old Western theology.

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### THE INTERPRETATION OF RELIGION

For more than two decades students of the rapidly developing science of religion have been subjected to the confusion of rival dogmatisms as to ultimate origins, rival theories of development, an endless variety of methods, contradictory yet plausible generalizations, and at least a half-hundred definitions of religion *überhaupt*. The air is full of catchwords—primitive monotheism, animism, naturism, preanimism, mana, totemism, fetishism, magic—each one of them selected by some group of writers as the very beginning of religion. And so this book was bound to come to proclaim the need of a methodology for the new science and to challenge superficial generalization and artistic theorizing. Under the strange title *Religion and Culture*<sup>1</sup> Dr. Schleiter has given us

<sup>1</sup> *Religion and Culture*. By Frederick Schleiter. New York: Columbia University Press, 1919. x+206 pages. \$2.00.

a critique of method which not only challenges modern methods and theories but deliberately drives them all from the field, some more gently than others. The victim of the confused strife of the past follows from chapter to chapter in eager enjoyment but closes the book with a sense of dismay, for he is offered no methodology; he is warned against making generalizations regarding religion; he feels certain that the author means that we do not yet know enough to make definite statements regarding religious origins and that if we want to know what religion is we must study it piecemeal in its cultural milieu in all its thousand-fold variety. How different and how much more difficult this is from the easy method of eclectic selection of materials for broad generalizations or from the building of evolutionary theories as "products of the cloister."

The author's constant protest is against the attempt to define "religion as such and at large" apart from its specific cultural and temporal setting. Writers with philosophic presuppositions are particularly liable to this error, but even students of specific elements of religion, such as magic or fetishism, tend to tear illustrative material from its setting in group life and to make hasty and delusive generalizations. The attempt to arrive at the meaning of religion in racial history by the study of a supposedly secluded group like the Australians is condemned, but still more hopeless is the comparative method. The same thing is not the same thing when it is different, and its differentia in its own life-milieu is obscured when it is pigeonholed under the familiar rubrics of the generalizer.

The effort of so many of the great pioneers of the religious sciences to discover a single line of religious evolution is characterized as "purely arbitrary" and the result as "a quasi-dramatic narrative." These "hypothetical schemes" are rarely tested "by means of concrete historical studies," and since "all evolutionary theories go back to a hypothetical primordium which furnishes the starting-point of their serial arrangement of data" if "the writer contrives to seize the wrong pig by the ear his further periods of development will not exhibit progressive improvement." The result is the present confusion of theories, all of them superficially plausible, but made so because the writers have neglected many cultural facts.

In a series of chapters Dr. Schleiter then examines the favored primordia—spirit, magical power, and its more particularized form "emanation"—and refuses to commit himself to any primordium, single and alone, as the actual origin of magico-religious practices.

In the three concluding chapters he sets forth the dangers incident to the use of the concept of causality, since "the nature of the articulating mechanism may not rise into the consciousness of the person who holds the belief." The dynamic relationship between the two elements in primitive religion Dr. Schleiter describes as the result of convergence. In the drift of time things and activities have flowed together, and the actors in the actual religious drama have no idea of a causal nexus, "so causality at large, when separated from its embodiment in concrete mental operations, is an artificial unit which does not assist us in the understanding, the comparison, or the elucidation of the phenomena involved."

As a preparation for a methodology—a destruction of methods to make way for method—Dr. Schleiter's work deserves the serious attention of all workers in the field of origins, social and religious, and may well be the most significant work of recent years.

An excellent illustration of the methods of generalization criticized by Schleiter is furnished by a recent volume on *Animism* by Dr. George W. Gilmore.<sup>1</sup> The author is not a novice in the field of history of religions. He might even rank as one of the pioneers in this science in America. This work shows a rich background of reading and to an uncritical reader will be a plausible, even convincing, sketch of the development of religious thought. It is necessary to say also that Dr. Gilmore is quite aware that he is treating only one element of a rich complex of life; yet the influence of Tyler is strong upon him, and one is sure that in his own mind totemism, taboo, magic and divination, mythology, witchcraft, fetishism, sacrifice, and the relation of magic to religion all find their explanation in the light of animism. A score of modern writers will be immediately tempted to say, in Schleiter's phrase, that he has "the wrong pig by the ear."

Animism for Dr. Gilmore means "a stage of culture in which man may regard any object, real or imaginary, as possessing emotional, volitional, and actional potency like that he himself possesses." Aligning himself with "the many" who regard animism as "the earliest form which religion took and as the root from which was derived all religious beliefs which the world has known" he shows how his animistic key unlocks the various doors in the temple of primitive religious thought. But it is *thought*, and the ghosts of social psychologists dance upon the page in warning. The explanations and generalizations are simple, but

<sup>1</sup> *Animism, or Thought Currents of Primitive People.* By George William Gilmore. Boston: Marshall Jones, 1919. xiii+250 pages. \$1.75.

it is a simplicity achieved by abstracting from the cultural milieu. In one section of the chapter on "Parity of Being" illustrations are given from America, Arabia, Greece, France, India, Mongolia, Banks Islands, New Hebrides, Africa, New Mexico, Alaska, and Australia to establish the existence in primitivity of the idea that inanimate objects in nature possess souls. Many of these illustrations are from culture religions and most of the others would with equal plausibility be explained by the preanimists in terms of the "mysterious power" or dynamism. It is against this false simplicity which loses religious life in religious formulas and so misses its rich particularity that modern students are beginning to rebel.

Dr. Gilmore is no half-hearted champion of his theory. He is ready to say "that it was the discovery of the soul which was the most momentous in the history of the human race"; to it must be traced all man's uplift in the millenniums of his existence. Animism gave us the belief in the soul of man, in life beyond the grave, and in superhuman powers. "For these three greatest conceptions entertained by humanity the race has to thank the stage of culture we have been studying." In the light of the struggle of the last half-century to find an interpretation of the significance of life which will overcome this very dualism one may perhaps be pardoned for a lack of enthusiasm in returning thanks. It is however much more important that we shall understand, and toward an understanding of the rise of dualism Dr. Gilmore's work is a welcome contribution.

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#### A COMMENTARY ON DEUTERONOMY

It is rather significant that the original edition of the Cambridge Bible contained no commentary on the Pentateuch. The editors of the revised edition have made ample amends for this omission. The commentaries which have already appeared on Genesis, Exodus, and Numbers are among the strongest in the series. And the latest addition is worthy to stand beside the best of them.<sup>1</sup> To the interpretation of Deuteronomy Sir George Adam Smith brings the remarkable gifts of exposition he has proved on so many fields of Old Testament study, the result being a book that is a delight both to heart and understanding.

<sup>1</sup> *The Book of Deuteronomy.* [The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges.] By Sir George Adam Smith. Cambridge: University Press, 1918. cxxii+396 pages. 6s. 6d.